

Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

CAT Report 577

Summary sheet

Address: Wendens Hall Farm, Wendens Ambo, Essex	
Parish: Wendens Ambo	District: Uttlesford
NGR: TL 51301 36336	Site codes: CAT project – 09/12b ECC HEM code– WEAWF10
Type of work: Archaeological monitoring and excavation	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: 14th-16th December 2010	Size of area investigated: 105m trench 300-400mm wide
Location of finds/curating museum: Saffron Walden Museum accession - SAFWM 2010.1	Funding source: Developer
Further seasons anticipated? No	Related EHER numbers: 217, 218
Final report: CAT Report 577 and summary in EAH	
Periods represented: post-medieval, modern	
<p>Summary of fieldwork results:</p> <p>The development site consists of a grade II listed barn and adjacent piggery located near the entrance to Wenden Hall Farm in Wendens Ambo, Essex (Fig 1). The site is situated to the south of the 11th-century church of St Mary the Virgin (EHER 217) and is located within the Wendens Ambo Conservation Area (TL 514 363). The long barn is listed as late 14th century with 17th century alterations. The development comprises the conversion of the long barn and the former piggery to form two residential units with associated gardens and car parking. Details of the archaeological work required were set out in a brief issued by Essex County Council Historic Environment Management (ECC HEM) officer Richard Havis. The fieldwork was carried out as according to the HEM brief, and to a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by CAT.</p> <p>The excavation of a 105m long trench for an electricity cable was monitored by a CAT employee between the 14th and 16th of December 2010. The northernmost 15m of the trench had been excavated and backfilled prior to the first visit. The cable trench was excavated using a mechanical excavator equipped with a 300mm wide toothless bucket. The trench was along the edge of a road constructed of concrete overlain with tarmac. At the eastern end, the trench crossed the road and continued for 6m across an area of grassland. In some areas hard standing associated with the barn and piggery abutted the road. In both instances the surfacing had been laid directly onto the natural chalk (L3). The trench was excavated to an overall depth of 600mm below modern ground level, with much of the trench excavated through the natural chalk and boulder clay deposits.</p> <p>Stretches of the trench were partially excavated through topsoil. Three topsoil layers were identified: a modern topsoil to the east of the road (L5) (Fig 2), a disturbed topsoil between the</p>	

boundary wall and the road (L6), and a modern topsoil covering most of the 'yard' area in front of the long barn that appeared to have been deposited during the recent works (L1). In places, an undisturbed clayey-silt more compact and lighter in colour than the overlying topsoil was identified beneath L1 and L6 (L2). L2 directly overlay the natural chalk and is probably an undisturbed soil accumulation. No finds were recovered from L2 but the absence of modern/post-medieval brick and tile suggest it is older than the overlying topsoil layers. A layer of flint flakes and pebbles was identified between the chalk and overlying road surface (L4). This layer was about 1.6m wide and may have been an old path. Alternatively, it may have been waste from the construction of the adjacent flint wall or hoggin associated with the construction of the road. Five features cut into the chalk were identified in the edges of the 300mm wide trench. F1 was a large, deep feature containing post-medieval/modern brick and peg-tile. A small building occupied this area, as shown on the early Ordnance Survey (OS) maps, which appears to have been removed between 1972 and 1982. It is probable that F1 is the ground disturbance associated with this building and its removal. Post-medieval brick and tile and part of a 15th century or 'Tudor' brick dating to the late medieval to early post-medieval period (Ryan 1996, 47) were recovered from F1. Near the old piggery, the remains of a brick structure were identified (F2) as probably being the foundation of a brick wall which adjoined the adjacent boundary wall and can be seen on early OS maps. A large, straight-sided probable pit was located 0.5 metres to the west of F2 (F3). Post-medieval/modern brick and peg-tile were recovered from F3. Further north-west a straight-sided post hole packed with large stones and post-medieval brick and tile (F4), and a small pit (F5), were identified (Fig 2).

Most of the ground affected by the excavation of the trench had already been disturbed during the construction of the road and other areas of hard standing. The cut features identified are probably associated with the use of the farm in the post-medieval and modern periods (i.e. old walls, posts etc.). The finds consist entirely of ceramic building material (CBM) recovered from F1, F3 & F4. In total, there are seven pieces of CBM, with a combined weight of 2010g. A report on the finds by Stephen Benfield has been included in the site archive.

Previous summaries/reports: None

Keywords: post-medieval/modern farm

Significance: *

Author of summary:
Adam Wightman

Date of summary:
December 2010

Appendix 1: contents of archive

One A4 document wallet containing;

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Copy of the excavation brief issued by ECC HEM
- 1.2 Copy of the WSI produced by CAT
- 1.3 Two site plans (1xA3 and 1xA4) provided by developer

2 Site Archive

- 2.1 Digital photo record
- 2.2 Attendance register
- 2.3 Context sheets (F1-F5, L1-L6)
- 2.4 Finds register
- 2.5 Site photographic record on cd
- 2.6 Site plan annotated with notes
- 2.7 A4 section sheet

3 Research Archive

- 3.1 Monitoring (client) report
- 3.2 Finds report

Finds

The finds occupy less than one box

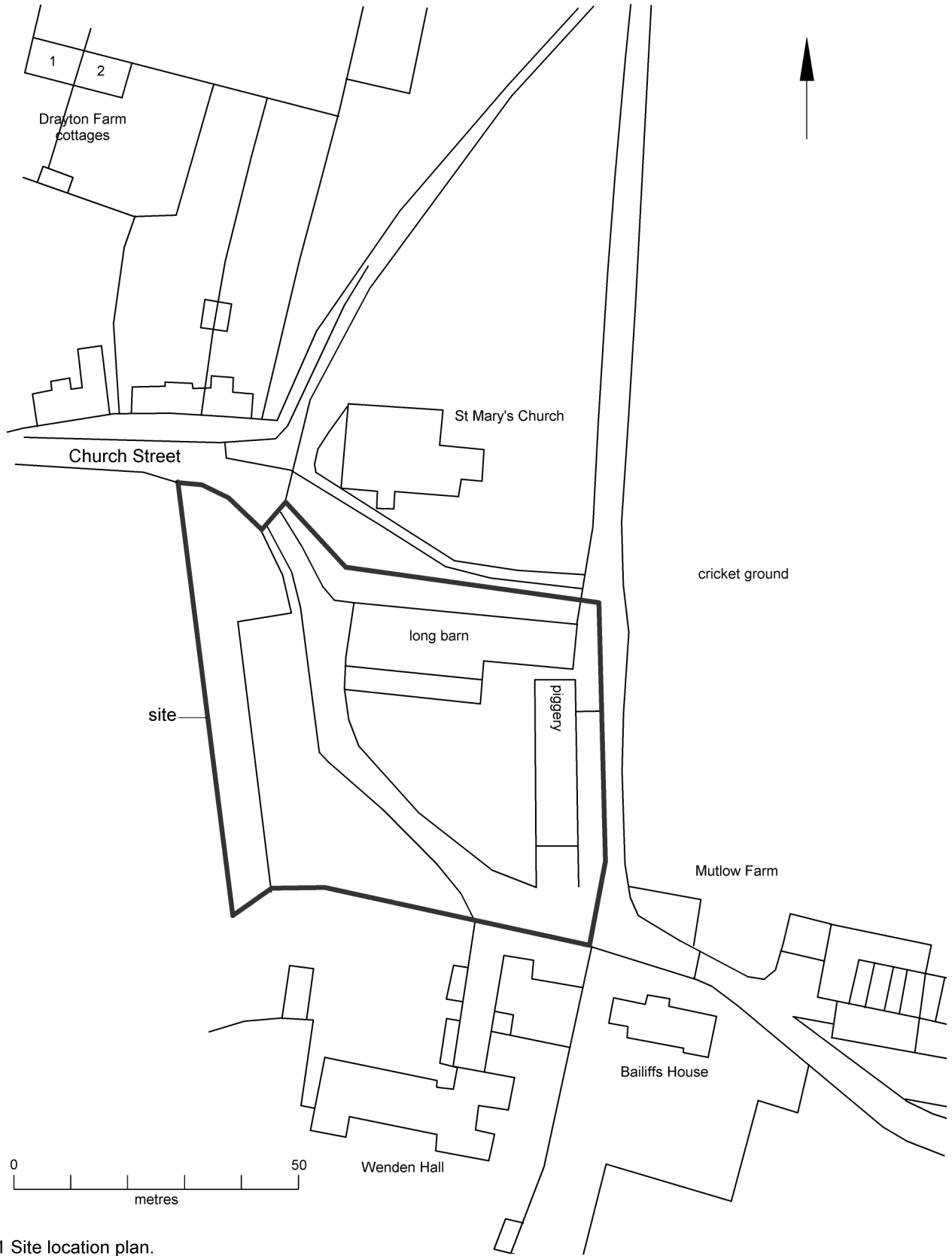


Fig 1 Site location plan.

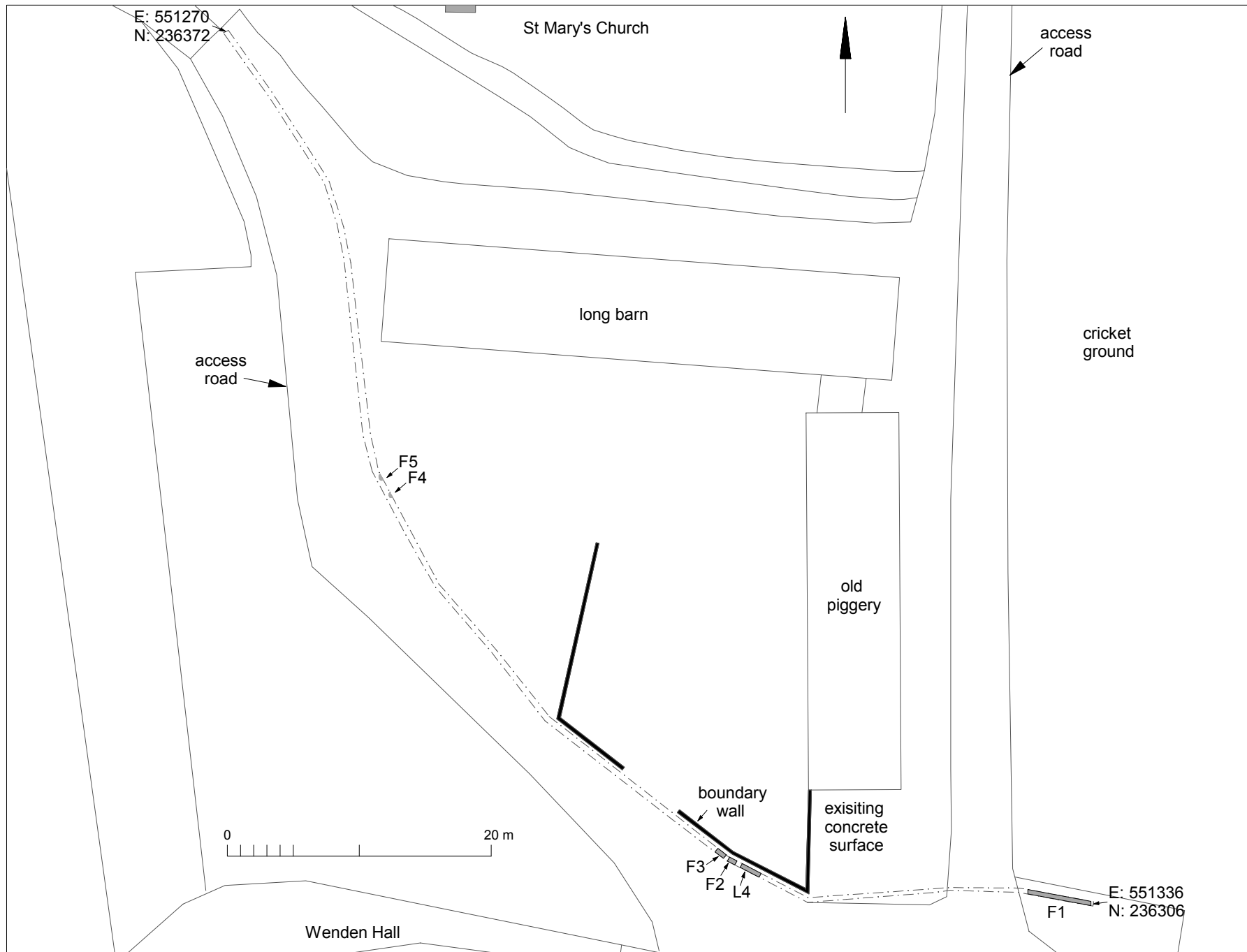


Fig 2 Results.